



Living Cities Workshop

Wednesday February 10th, 2016
Parliament House, Canberra

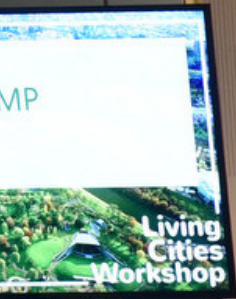
REPORT

Contents

The Workshop

A Five Point National Green Infrastructure Plan

The Living Cities Alliance



“Green infrastructure is defined as natural vegetation and vegetative technologies - like urban forests, greenways, restored and constructed wetlands, green roofs, green walls, bioswales, and more - that provide society with benefits like enhanced liveability, improved energy efficiency, improved air and water quality, reduced flooding and increased recreational opportunities”

The Living Cities Workshop

The Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) in Partnership with Engineers Australia (EA) hosted the Living Cities Workshop on Wednesday 10th February at Parliament House, Canberra. It was an opportunity that brought together interests from the all parts of the green infrastructure spectrum - architecture, landscaping, water management, engineering, science, research, land management, policy, real estate and governance.

Political leaders from all major parties shared their positions, and representative associations articulated their goals. The Living Cities event among all things, helped unite many voices into one.

From our Political Leaders

Throughout the workshop's morning session, political leaders from the major political parties shared their positions, platforms and aspiration around greening Australia's cities, and how the country advances to be sustainable, resilient and productive.

Paul Fletcher MP, Member for Bradfield and Minister for Territories, Local Government and Major Projects

The Minister's opening speech reiterated the Turnbull Governments commitment to articulating and implementing a Cities' agenda, and then articulated a range of benefits as to why "greener cities are healthier cities." The Minister also confirmed the governments commitment to establishing decade by decade goals out to 2060 for increasing overall tree coverage in our cities.



"Cities with high levels of trees, foliage and green spaces provide enormous benefits to their residents".

Adam Bandt MP, Member for Melbourne

The Member for Melbourne was proud of the great work that has already been done in some parts of the country, in helping build greater urban forests, but challenged us all on the need to increase the level of investment in community and public space and to “grow the natural ecology of the city.”

“There is so much opportunity to grow the natural ecology of the city, through rooftop gardens and vertical plantings; community gardens and people growing their own food”.



Anthony Albanese MP, Member for Grayndler, Shadow Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Shadow Minister for Cities and Shadow Minister for Tourism

The Shadow Minister for Cities reaffirmed Federal Labor’s commitment to cities, citing among many things, the production and release of Australia’s first national urban policy. The Minister also feared that “if sustainability is not a priority when we consider new projects then we put all our urban environment amenities at great risk.”

“We must prioritise the health of our parks, open spaces and urban waterways.”



Industry, United

During the workshop's afternoon session, a range of activity canvases were used to strengthen the groups vision and goals, as well as start to identify core opportunities for building a national green infrastructure leadership platform and how this may be activated.

Activities included an assessment of the groups readiness and preparation to collaborate – the capacity, strengths, alignment of interests and identification of key partners. Another sub-group activity included the creation of an industry asset map, to determine the funding, in-kind support, incentives, organizational capacity, skills and knowledge to collaborate to implement co-actions.

A Policy Roadmap canvas was used to help a number of the sub-groups identify potential policy goals, actions, priorities and milestones. Three sub-groups worked to identify the components of a comprehensive policy campaign, by considering the vision and goals, key opportunities, targets and metrics.

A Five Point National Living Infrastructure Plan

The alliance of partners gathered for the workshop (who have formed the Living Cities Alliance) provided input into what has been framed as a National Five Point Living Infrastructure Plan.

- 1. National Living Cities Fund** – establishing an investment fund for the implementation of green infrastructure projects across Australia. This would involve a percentage of all federal government expenditure on 'grey infrastructure' projects (eg. Roads) to be placed in an investment fund for allocation to state and local government green infrastructure projects. This fund could be operated similar to the Clean Energy Finance Corporation, which seeks to leverage private sector funding to enhance public benefit outcomes through government investment.

Outcome: Sustained level of national funding for green infrastructure implementation.

- 2. Living Infrastructure as an Asset Class (or our equivalent)** – aimed at having green infrastructure formally recognized by Treasury as an asset class to be valued during business case development for major federally funding projects. This would involve the development of a business case and value proposition for green infrastructure to be articulated and endorsed by Treasury, followed by the development and use of a set of evidence-based green infrastructure criteria used in business case approvals and value capture via Treasury.

Outcome: Green infrastructure supported and recognised by Treasury as an asset class. With agreed measurable outcomes.

- 3. Local Government Green Infrastructure Package** – a national incentives package would be created and delivered through local government to elevate the priority of green infrastructure strategies. A specific condition of this incentives package would be the active removal of barriers (eg. Policy, codes etc) and introduction of positive policies and frameworks to accelerate the deployment of green infrastructure investments. The package would provide funding to Local Government to accelerate projects that embed green infrastructure strategies such as green roofs, green streets, reestablish networks of public open space and increasing urban tree canopy coverage. This program would also be used to encourage creative green infrastructure funding and implementation strategies, such as density bonuses for greater open space, and stormwater retention credit trading systems.

Outcome: Removal of barriers to green infrastructure investment and accelerated implementation of new projects and policies.

- 4. National Green Streets and 'Grey to Green' Pilot Program** – seeking to redefine the role and design of road corridors that express the full potential of environmental, social and economic benefits from green infrastructure strategies, as well as the active retrofit of grey infrastructure to green infrastructure. This would involve a proof of concept pilot study across urban and suburban areas to test the design and implementation of green streets designs and the subsequent production of a National Green Streets guide for application by government and private sector on road projects.

Outcome: National pilot program launched and National Green Streets Guide produced.

- 5. Minimum SITES Ratings for Federally Funded Projects** – building a culture of comprehensive landscape assessment and strategy development in all federally funded infrastructure projects. By applying the SITES rating tool and having projects certified, confirms a commitment to best practice sustainable landscape management on major projects. Having these projects independently verified as meeting best practice standards promotes healthy functioning landscapes and maximum public benefit.

Outcome: All federally funded infrastructure projects pursue a SITES rating for best practice landscape management.

The Living Cities Alliance

The Living Cities Alliance seeks to affect positive change, nationally, in our cities and regions as they pursue a quest to become more sustainable, resilient, productive and equitable. The Alliance seeks to promote green infrastructure investment as a core strategy to achieve these outcomes.

The Living Cities Alliance will bring together a united voice of organizations, sectors and trades that collectively plan, design, build, maintain and steward green infrastructure in Australia. We represent the public, private and non-profit sectors.

Our work will be strategic in nature, collaborative in approach and grounded in research.

The Alliance embraces the core principles of the 'collective impact' model for large-scale change, namely:

- Embracing a common agenda;
- Encouraging shared measurement;
- Delivering mutually reinforcing activities;
- Providing continuous communication; and
- Resourced through backbone support.

Organisations currently signed onto the Living Cities Alliance include;

Australian Institute of Landscape Architects	Horticulture Innovation Australia
Australian Institute of Refrigeration, Air Conditioning and Heating	Infrastructure Sustainability Council of Australia
Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council	Institute for Sustainable Futures University of Technology, Sydney
ACT Government	Institute of Australian Consulting Arboriculturists
ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability	Landcare Australia
202020 vision	Landscaping Victoria
City of Sydney	Lawn Solutions Australia
Clean Air and Urban Landscapes Hub, University of Melbourne	LNA Master Landscapers Association
CRC for Low Carbon Living	Melbourne City Council
CRC for Water Sensitive Cities	National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF)
CSIRO	Nursery & Garden Industry Australia
Eco Creative	Parks & Leisure Australia
Engineers Australia	Rainwater Harvesting Association of Australia
Green Building Council of Australia	Soil Science Australia
Green Roofs Australasia	Turf Australia
GreenFleet	Urban Design Forum